

# BIBLIOBURRO

a true story from colombia



JEANETTE WINTER



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BEACH LANE BOOKS • New York London Toronto Sydney



## BEACH LANE BOOKS

An imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division  
1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10020

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Book design by Lauren Rille

The text for this book is set in MVB Grenadine.

The illustrations for this book are rendered in acrylic paint with pen and ink.

Manufactured in China

0310 SCP

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Winter, Jeanette.

*Biblioburro* : a true story from Colombia / Jeanette Winter.—1st ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-1-4169-9778-8

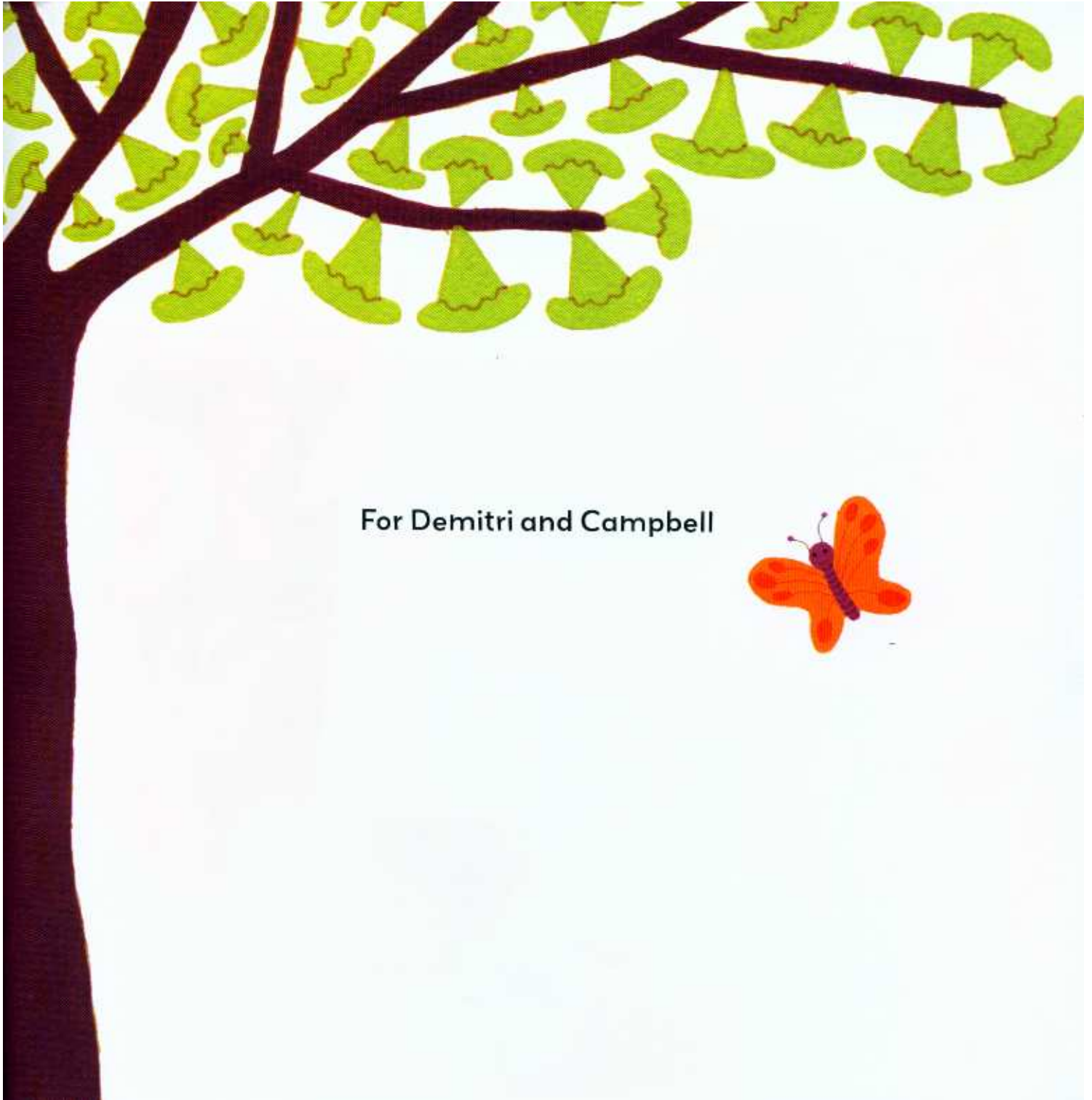
1. Soriano, Luis—Juvenile literature. 2. Librarians—Colombia—Biography—Juvenile  
literature. 3. Teachers—Colombia—Biography—Juvenile literature. 4. *Biblioburro*—  
Juvenile literature. 5. Traveling libraries—Colombia—Juvenile literature. 6. Books and  
reading—Colombia—Juvenile literature. I. Title.

Z720.S67W56 2010

020'.92—dc22

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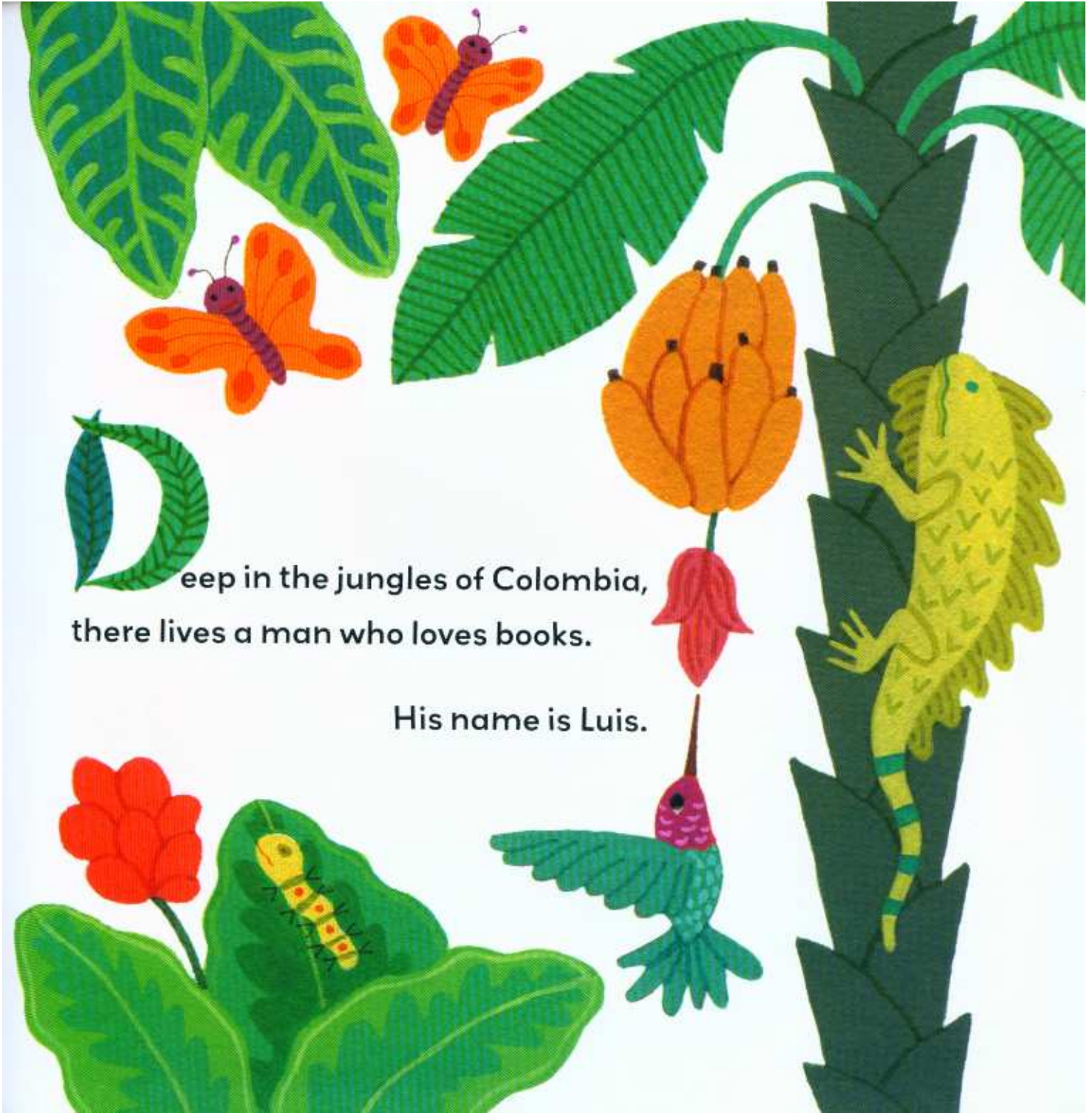
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For Demitri and Campbell





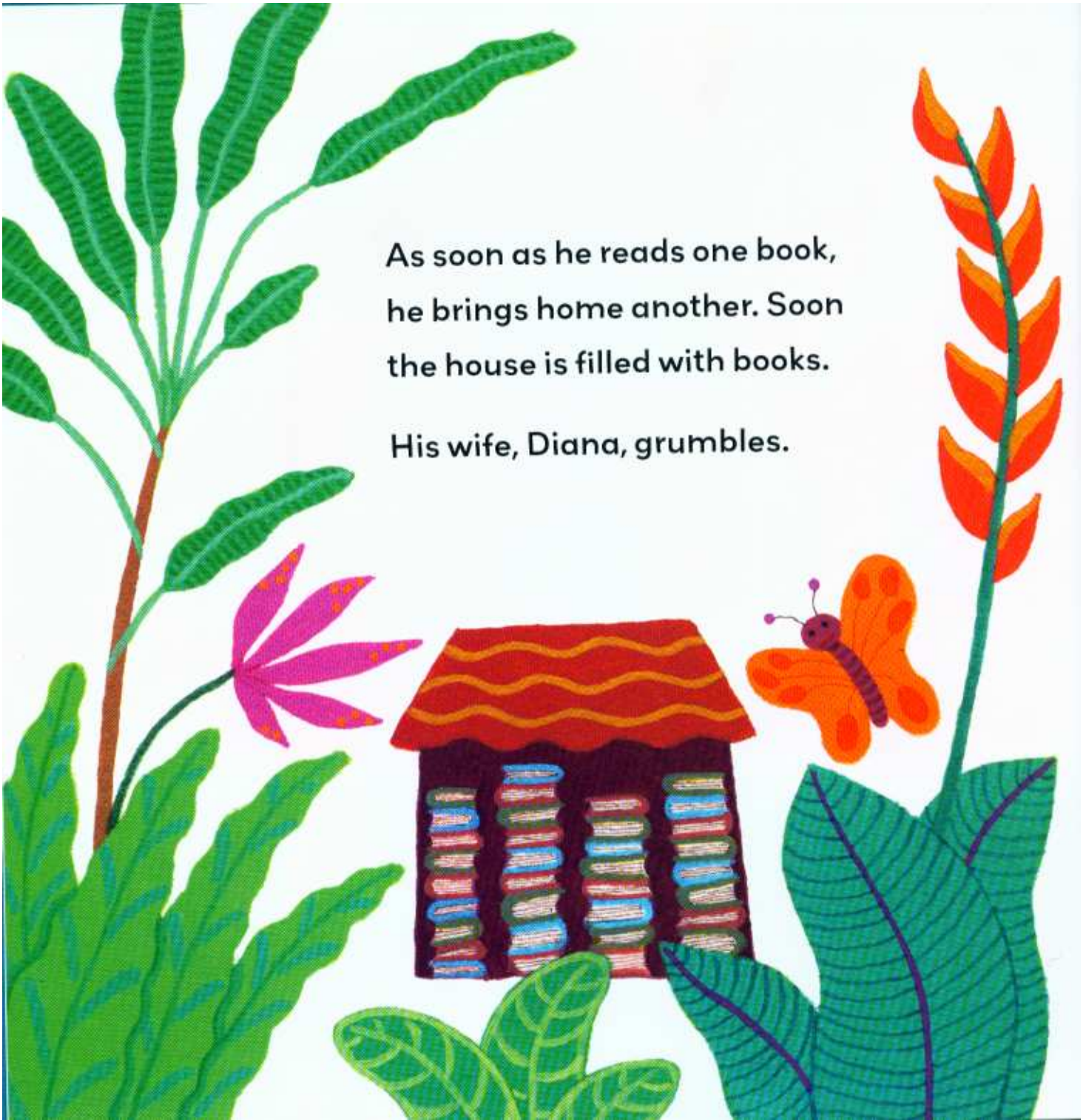


Deep in the jungles of Colombia,  
there lives a man who loves books.

His name is Luis.

As soon as he reads one book,  
he brings home another. Soon  
the house is filled with books.

His wife, Diana, grumbles.







Luis thinks long and hard.  
At last an idea pops into his head.

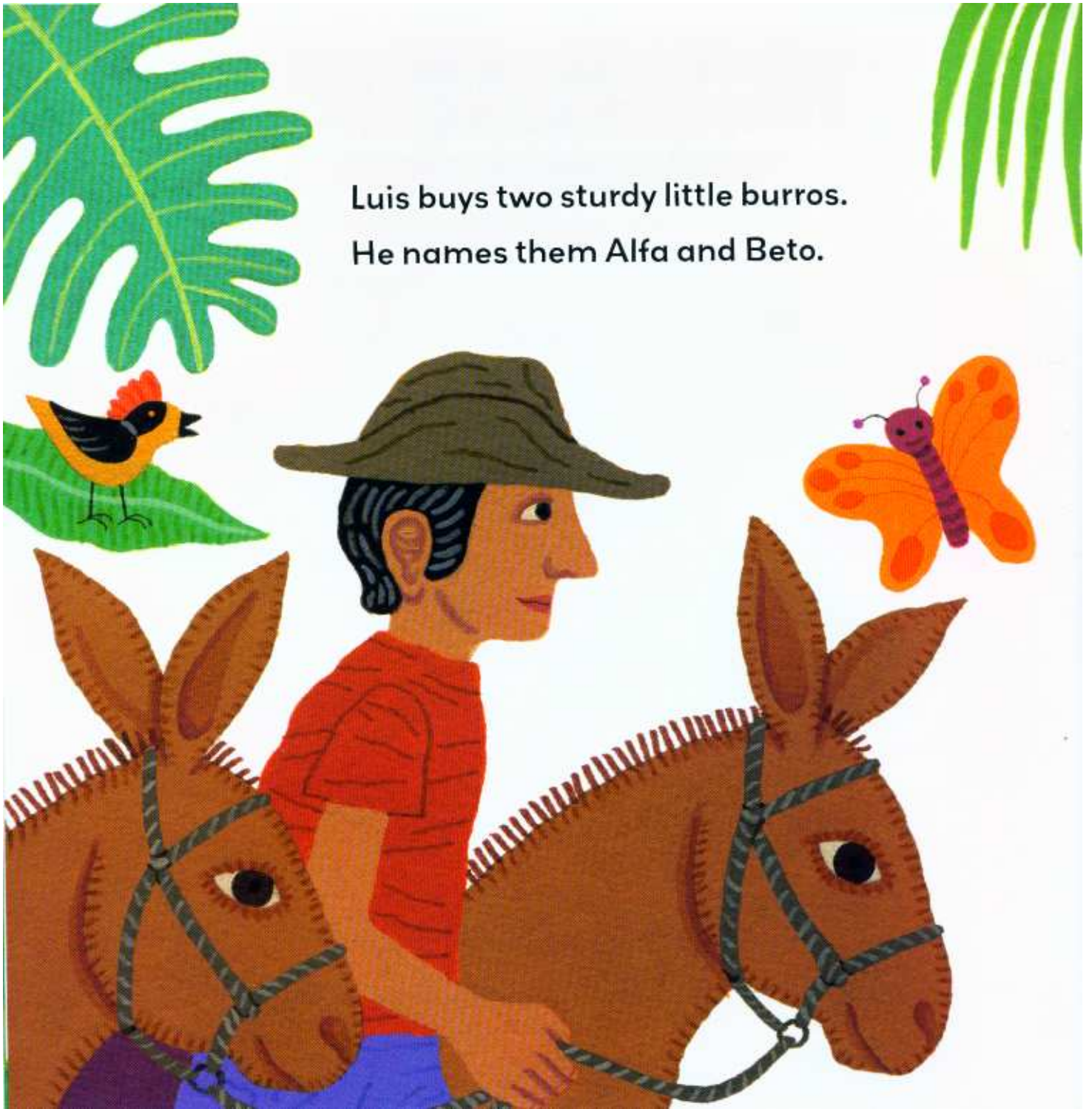



"I can bring my books into the faraway hills  
to share with those who have none.



One burro could carry books,  
and another burro could carry me—and more books!"

Luis buys two sturdy little burros.  
He names them Alfa and Beto.





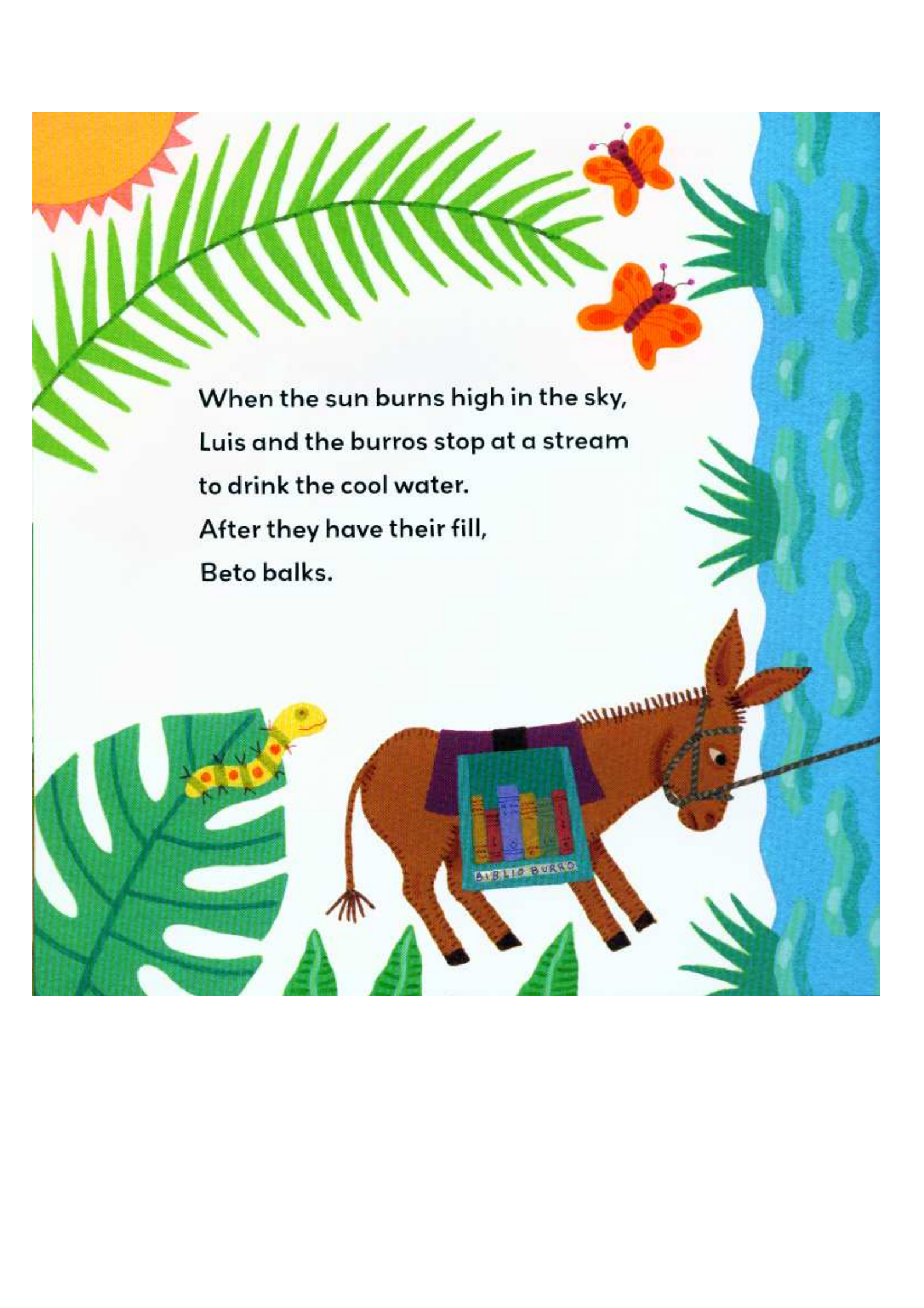
He builds crates to hang on their backs,  
and paints signs: **BIBLIOPURRO**—  
“The Burro Library.”  
Then Diana fills the crates with books.

Every week, Luis and Alfa and Beto set off across the countryside  
to faraway villages in the lonely hills.



This week they travel to El Tormento.





When the sun burns high in the sky,  
Luis and the burros stop at a stream  
to drink the cool water.  
After they have their fill,  
Beto balks.

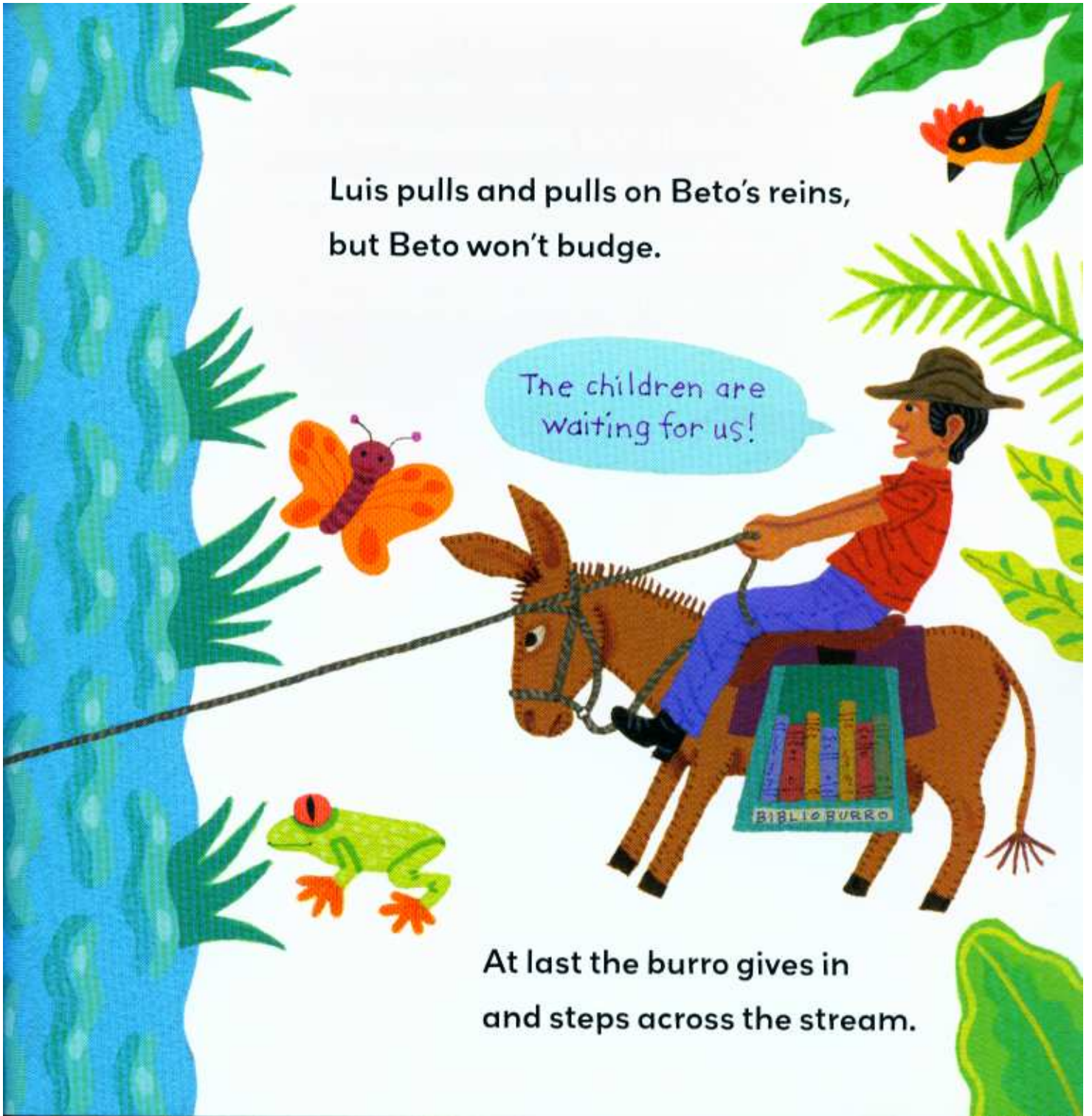




Luis pulls and pulls on Beto's reins,  
but Beto won't budge.

The children are  
waiting for us!

At last the burro gives in  
and steps across the stream.

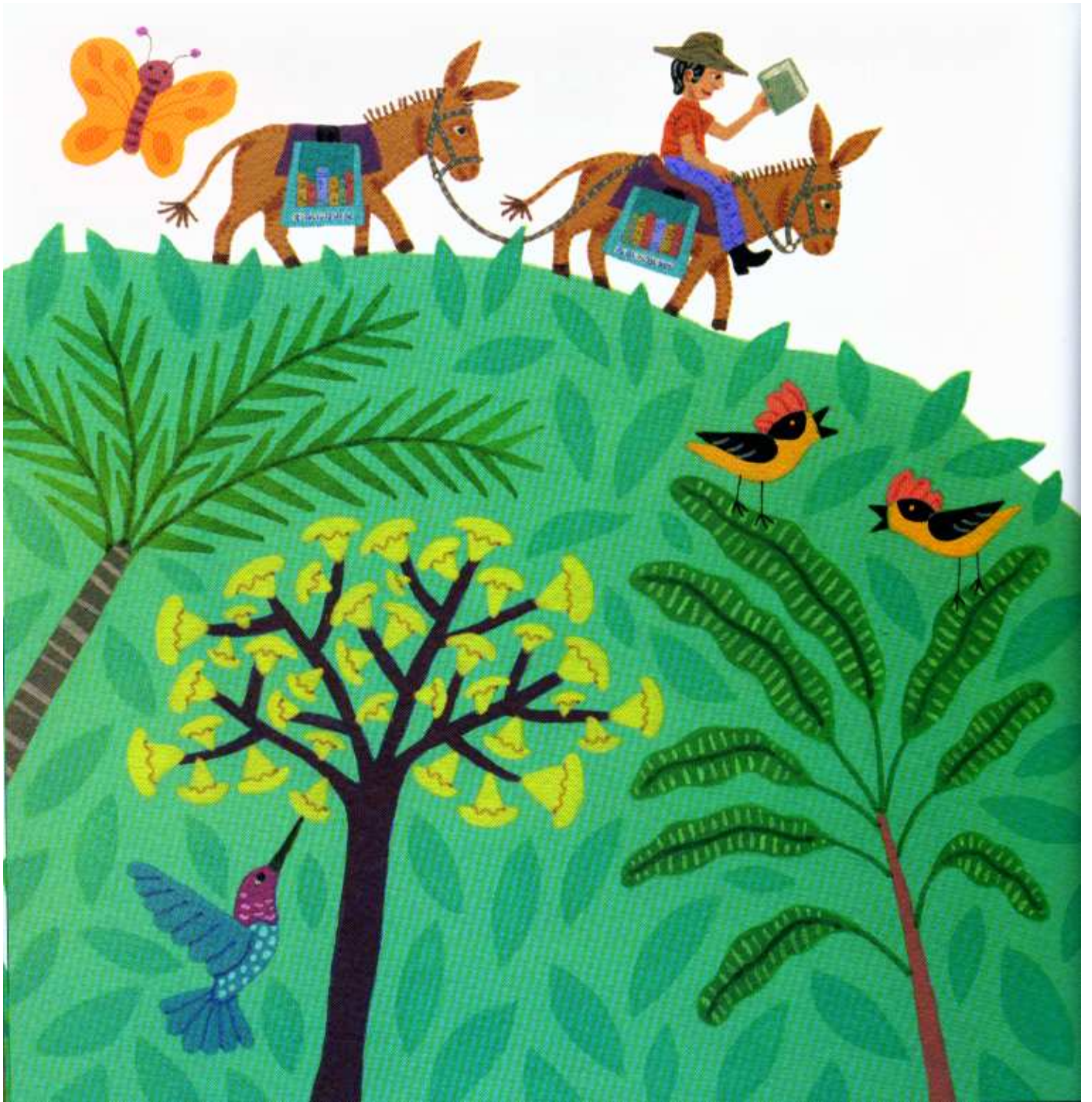


Deep in the hills, the path is lonelier than ever.  
Bird songs are the only sounds they hear.  
Then, from deep in the shadows,  
a bandit leaps out!



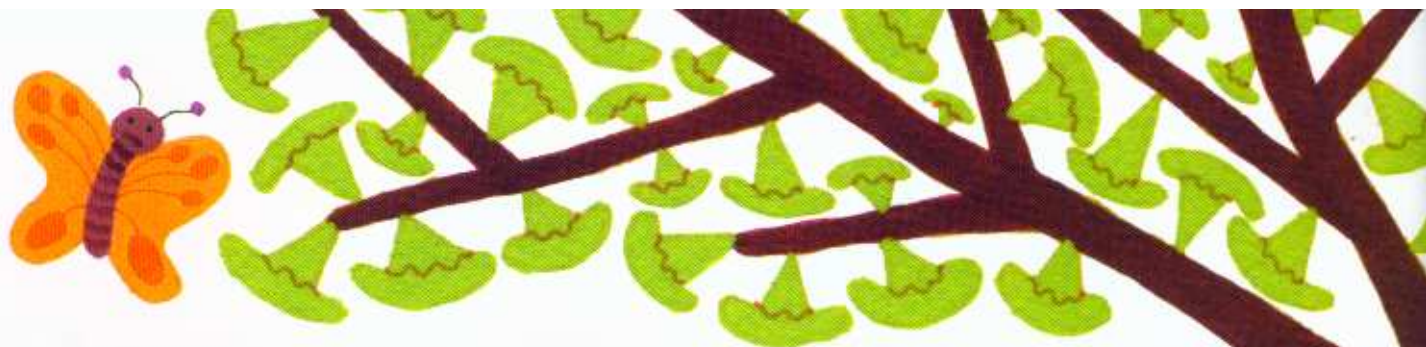
"Please let us pass," Luis says.  
"The children are waiting."  
The bandit scowls at the books.  
But he takes one and growls,  
"Next time I want silver!"





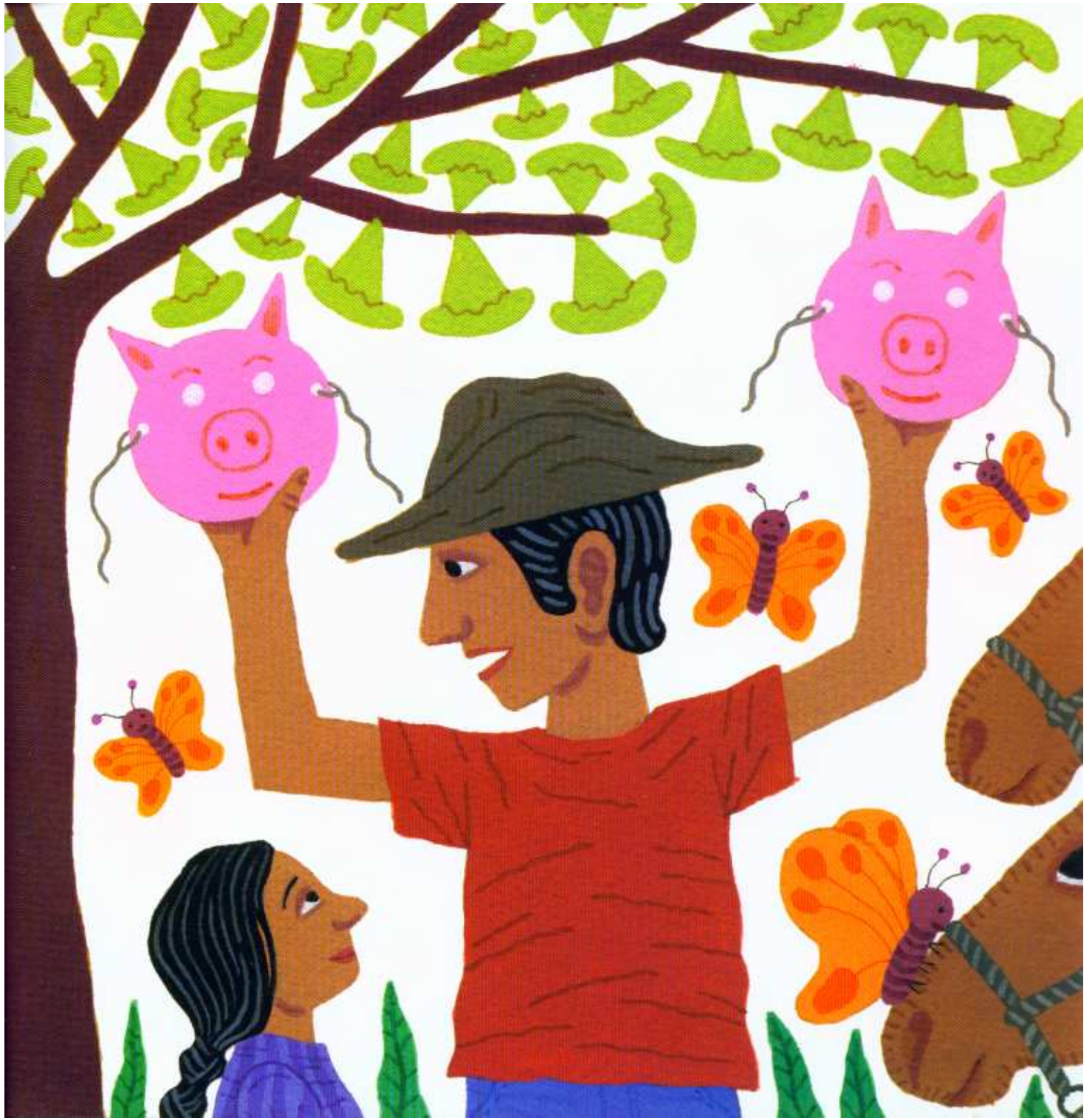
The Biblioburro continues on its way  
over the hills, until at last,  
Luis sees houses below.  
The children of El Tormento run to meet him.





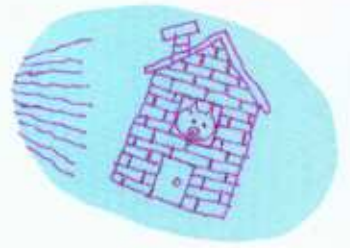
Luis insists on reading a story  
before they choose books to borrow.  
“Today I have a surprise for you,” he says.  
He reaches behind the books  
and pulls out a bundle of masks—little piglets!  
“Put on a mask, and I’ll read you a tale about pigs.”








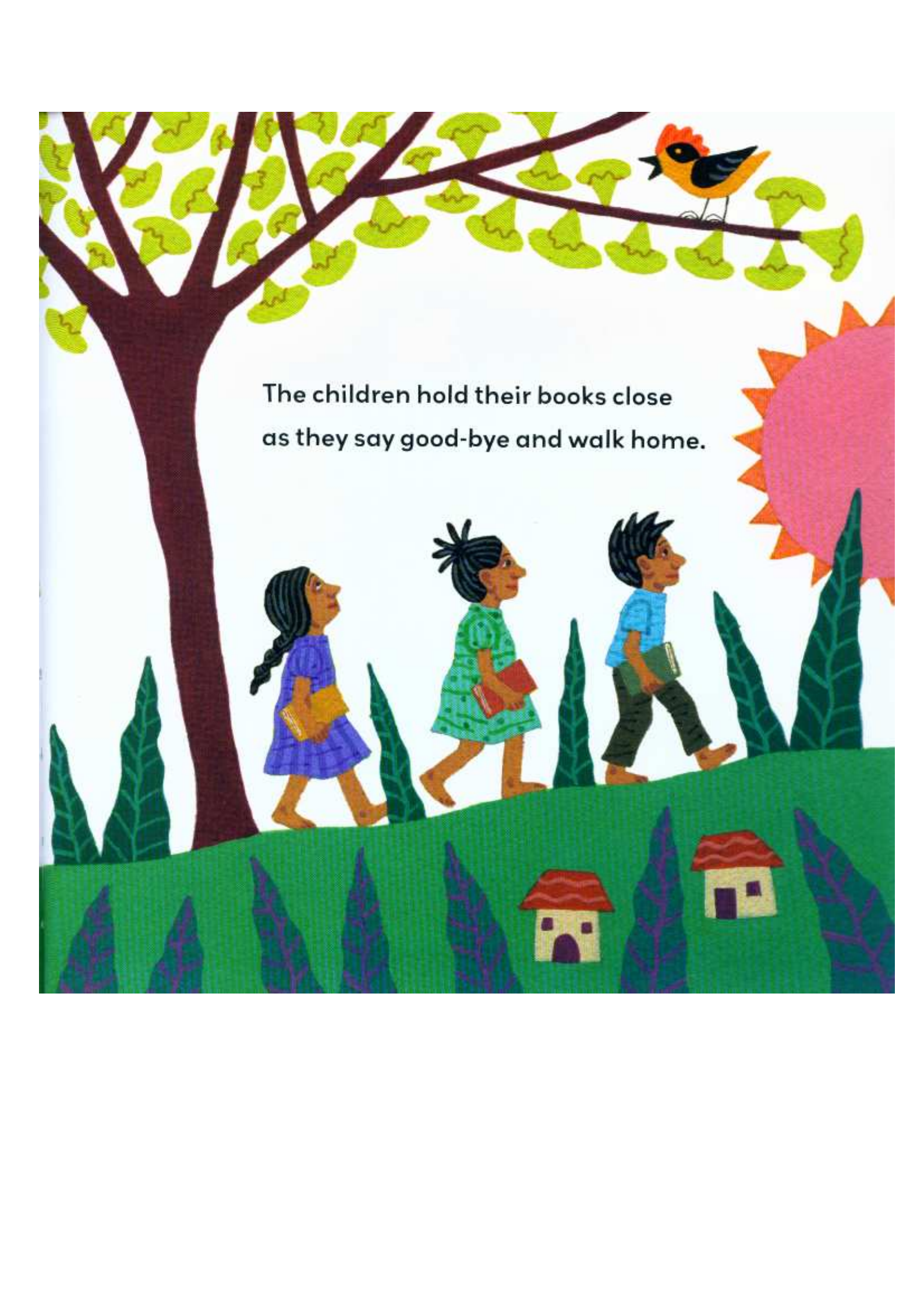




A colorful illustration featuring a hummingbird with a pink and blue body and a long beak, perched on a branch with yellow leaves. A large orange butterfly with purple spots is flying in the sky above the text.

When the story ends,  
it's time for everyone  
to choose a book.



An illustration of three children walking home on a green hill. On the left is a large tree with a thick brown trunk and green leaves. A small bird with a red crest and black and orange body is perched on a branch. On the right is a large, bright pink sun with orange rays. The children are walking from left to right. The first child is a girl in a purple dress carrying a yellow book. The second is a girl in a green patterned dress carrying a red book. The third is a boy in a blue shirt and dark pants carrying a green book. In the background, there are several green trees and two small houses with red roofs and purple doors.

The children hold their books close  
as they say good-bye and walk home.

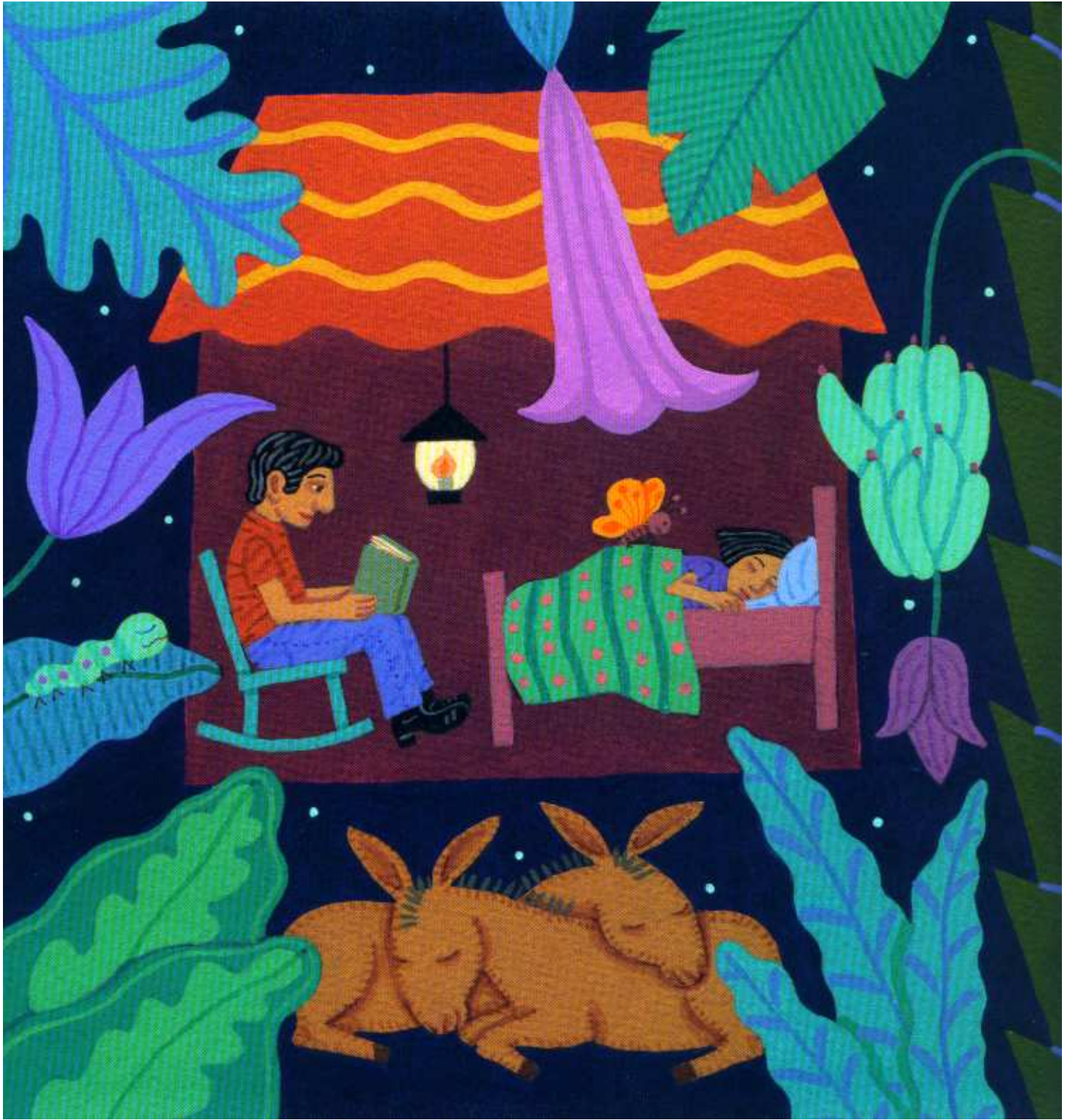
Luis and Alfa and Beto head back, over and around the hills,

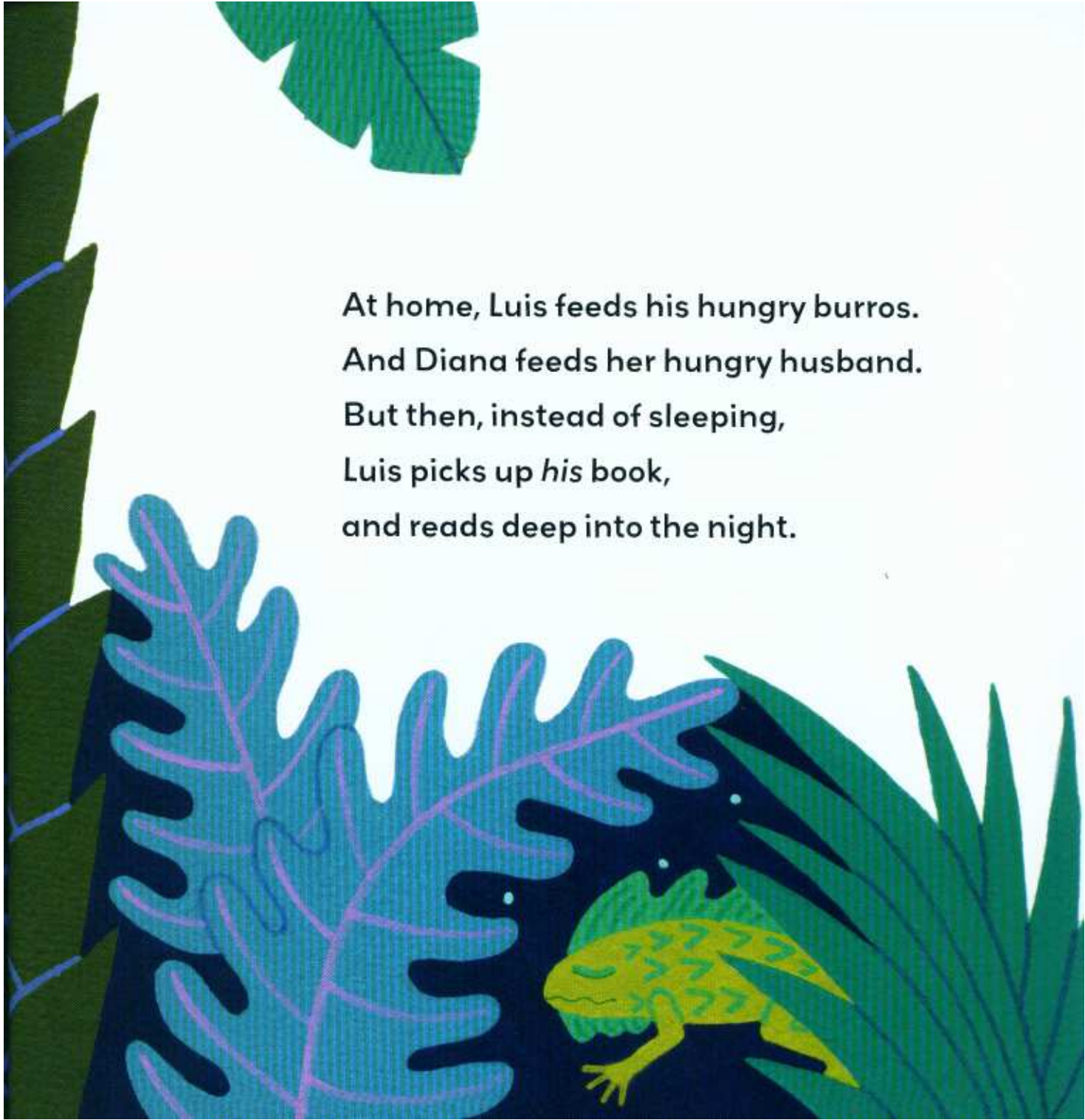




across the grasslands and streams, and into the sunset.

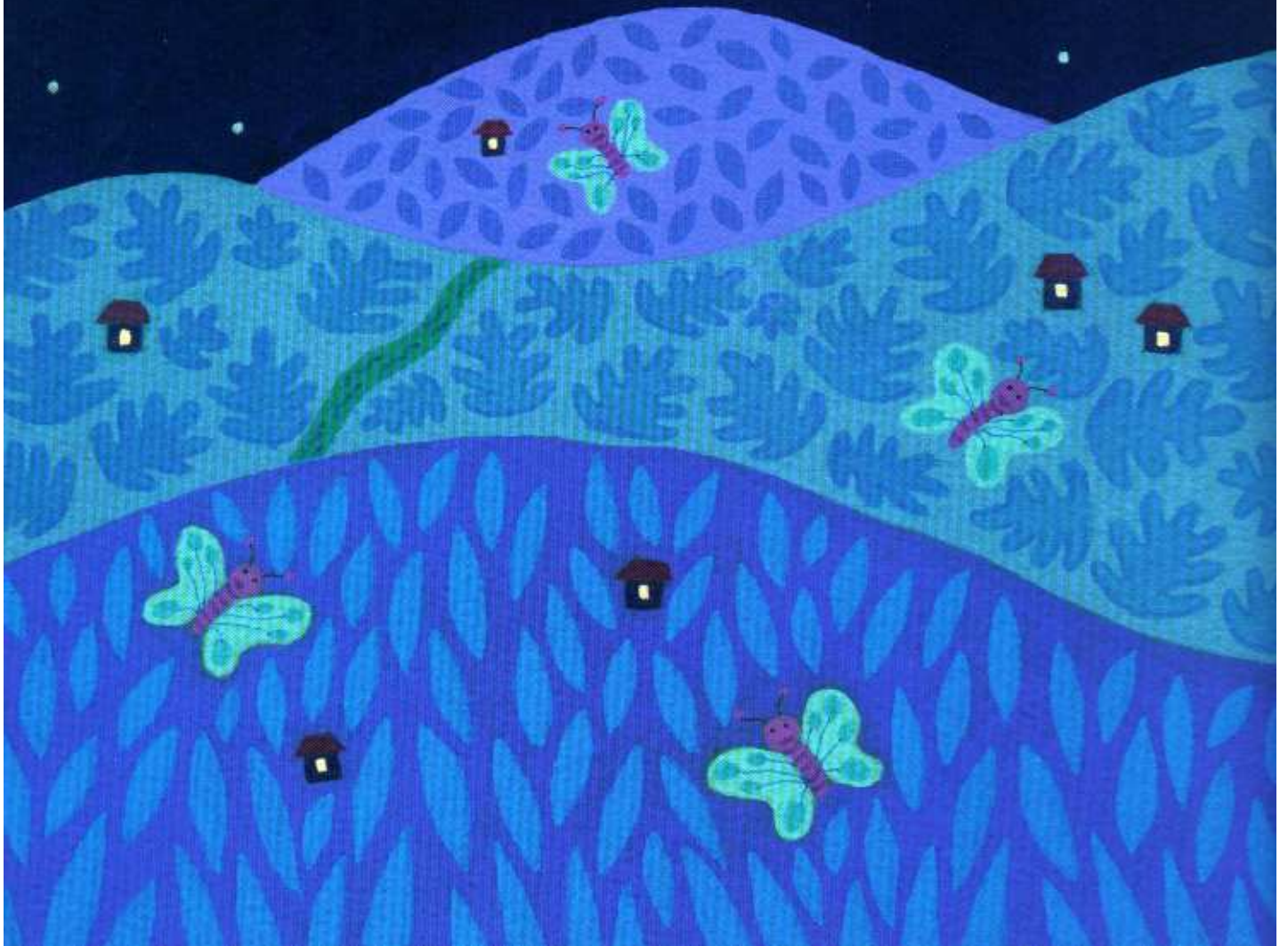




An illustration of a green frog with yellow spots sitting on a dark surface in a jungle at night. The background is dark blue with large, stylized green and yellow leaves. The frog is facing left and has its eyes closed, suggesting it is sleeping. The text is centered in the upper half of the page.

At home, Luis feeds his hungry burros.  
And Diana feeds her hungry husband.  
But then, instead of sleeping,  
Luis picks up *his* book,  
and reads deep into the night.

And far away in the hills, candles and lanterns burn





as the children read borrowed books deep into their night, too.



The page is decorated with various tropical elements. At the top, there are green palm fronds. On the left side, there are large green leaves and a pink flower. On the right side, there are orange and yellow leaves. In the bottom left, a man is sitting on a rock reading a book. In the bottom center, there is an orange butterfly. In the bottom right, there is a yellow caterpillar on a green leaf.

**“People around here love stories. I’m trying to keep that spirit alive in my own way.”—Luis Soriana**

*Biblioburro* is based on the true story of Luis Soriana, who lives in La Gloria, a remote town in northern Colombia. An avid reader, Luis understood the transformative power of reading because of his experiences as a schoolteacher. He wanted to share his collection of books with the children and adults in the isolated villages in the distant hills, where books were scarce. Most houses had none.

Luis and his two burros began bringing books to the villages in 2000.

He started with a collection of 70 books that has grown to over 4,800, mostly from donations. Now the Biblioburro travels to the hills every weekend. Three hundred people, more or less, look forward to borrowing the books Luis brings.

A small corner of the world is enriched.

—J. W.